

DOWN the TOBOGGAN SLIDE

By Charles Willstead

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"Father will have a cold drive from town tonight against that awful wind," remarked Mrs. Muir as she drew her chair up to the old fashioned fireplace between her son and daughter. "Hope he won't come by the new road. The bridge over the ravine isn't just in proper shape yet."

"Listen! There are sleigh bells," interrupted George.

"It's not father," volunteered Mary. "He took the old harness with the string bells."

"No," said George, winking at his mother; "those bells belong to Fred Watson, and you know it. Who is leading in the race now, sis—Ed Simpson or Fred?"

"Mother, make him behave," pleaded the girl.

"Oh, George, don't be such a tease! Open the door and help Fred put his horse up."

"Well, I am betting two to one on Simpson, Mary. He is a poor starter, but he'll finish strong," laughed the young man as he reached for his hat.

If Mary heard, she made no reply. In a moment he returned. "Sis," he shouted, "Fred has the colt hitched up to his new cutter, and he wants to know if you will go over to Thompson's."

"Not as far as Thompson's," answered Mrs. Muir. "It is too windy and cold, but if Fred has plenty of wraps you may drive down toward the village and come home with father."

The young people were on speedily along the road. Near the ravine they came upon Ed Simpson, dragging a toboggan. Ed was passionately fond of the sport and generally went to the hills on the nights when Fred Watson was at the Muir home. Mary had a great fear of tobogganing and would not share his pleasure.

Fred Watson and Ed Simpson, according to village gossip, were both courting Mary. Mr. Muir was said to look with favor upon Fred. Simpson, on the surface, was more the friend of George than the lover of Mary. He had come up to Maysville from the city two years before to start a small commission store and was well liked by the farmers of the community. Fred was the son of rich Farmer Watson and did little else than drive a good horse.

Timid little Mary, if she had any preference, hid it successfully. And both men had vowed to have a definite answer soon.

"Going to the hills on a blowy night like this?" called Mary as they passed Simpson.

"Yes," came the good natured reply. "It takes worse weather than this to spoil sport for me."

The cutter sped on, and Ed plodded cheerily along the road, deep in thought.

Suddenly the jingle of bells ahead stopped. Looking up, Ed saw that some one was struggling to jump out of the cutter. It was a girl's figure. Instinctively Simpson rushed forward, dragging the toboggan behind him. As he came nearer he heard her cry:

"Please go. Drive like mad by the old road, and I will wait here and call to father should he come from the other side."

"No, Mary," answered Watson, "I will not go and leave you here."

"What's up?" cried Ed, hurrying to the side of the cutter.

"Oh, Mr. Simpson, the new bridge has given way in the center. Therefore, it has carried away the lights on the other end. If father should come this way, he would drive straight to death. Mr. Watson, please hurry, Oh, do!"

"Miss Mary," interrupted Ed, "let me stay here, and you drive round with Mr. Watson. 'Tis too cold for you to stand here."

"No, no! I would only be an added burden for the horse. Oh, why don't you drive on, Mr. Watson?"

"There is the light of a rig down at the second bend," cried Ed excitedly, pointing across the ravine. Then, without another word, he seized the toboggan and rushed for the edge of the hill. Watson, realizing that time was precious, whipped up his horse and made for the old road around the ravine. The distance was fully two miles, but the rig on the other side was fully half a mile from the bridge, coming slowly. He might make it.

"You are too late, Watson," yelled Simpson. "Stay here with Mary. I will go down the ravine."

Watson was out of hearing, but Mary Muir took in the situation at a glance.

"Mr. Simpson," she called, running after him, "you must not! See! The wreck has fallen right across the foot of the slide, and you will rush to your death. Please don't go that way."

"I must. There is a slight opening there to the right, and I can make it in the moonlight. Besides, it's your father or me, and I can take the chance, for—he hesitated a second, then spoke hurriedly—"Watson will never catch him in time, but I will catch him at the foot of the first turn if all is well."

"Can't we call?" she asked appealingly.

"No. The wind is too strong from that direction."

"Then I am going with you, Ed." Ed! She had never called him that before!

"Mary, dear, it might mean your death. You must not come."

She laid her hand on his arm. "I am going. You can steer better with two

on board. And, Ed, I know you will be more careful if I am with you."

Very gently and without further parley he placed her on the toboggan in front of him, then pushed the sled to the brink of the steep decline.

"Hold fast, little one," he said, "and before we leave"—He stooped over her and, raising her white face, kissed it tenderly. And then—they were off.

Like an arrow shot from the bow they sped over the snowy surface down to the bottom. Along the level they dashed for a few furlongs, straight through the only opening in the wreckage of the bridge, then over the icy surface of the creek, on, on up the hill to the first turn of the road, then—crash!

Ed was dazed even as he scrambled to his feet.

"Hil, there!" called a voice. "Sure as shooting, you've killed that gal!"

A sturdy, heavy set man tumbled out of a rig and came running down the hill.

"You idiot, you ought to be jailed for this!" spluttered the old fellow in great excitement. But Ed heard not a word. He had Mary in his arms when the infuriated farmer seized him by the shoulder.

"She is killed, you young idiot, and I'll see that you hang for it! Give her to me, sir! Whose daughter is she, sir?" The man, recognizing the voice, turned about the old fellow exclaimed in surprise: "If it ain't you, Simpson, I'll be blamed! I always knew you for a venturesome idiot! And my God—my Mary!"

"Hush, father! I am not hurt; not even a bit! I'm fainted. And please, father, don't abuse Ed that way. You would be thanking him if you knew what he risked for me—I mean for you."

Then, catching sight of Simpson's face, red and bleeding, womanlike she turned from the embrace of her parent, threw her arms about her lover's neck and burst into tears.

"No, sir, he is not a young fool," said Mr. Muir emphatically as he drove home with Fred Watson, having turned his own rig over to the young couple. "Confound it, sir, he is a man in a thousand, and I am as good a judge of men as Mary, sir!"

Sensitive Gems.

The discoloration of precious stones when they have been exposed to the air for a long time is considered one of the most frequent maladies. Emeralds, rubies and sapphires are those which remain intact best. Nevertheless, they are not exempt from changes. Two rubies of the same size and shade were kept for two years—one in a showcase and the other away from all light. At the end of this term a comparison revealed that the first had become somewhat lighter in color.

The influence of light makes itself felt more plainly on topazes and garnets. The garnet turns much paler in a short time, while the topaz assumes a darker shade and even loses the brilliancy possessed by it when freshly cut.

The most sensitive stone in this respect is the opal. This stone draws its marvelous rainbow reflections from numerous little clefts, which allow the light to pass, and reflect it in different directions. Often the opal stands the manipulations of cutting and polishing well, and all of a sudden it splits.

Pearls deteriorate very easily. In the five they are transformed into a piece of lime. Placed in contact with an acid they behave as lime or marble would under the same conditions.

Diamonds are less sensitive; still, it is not prudent to take them too near the fire. Philadelphia Inquirer.

They Hang Out a Pincushion.

In some of the cities of Holland, such as Haarlem, the birth of a child is announced to the neighbors and all who chance to pass by the curious custom of hanging a pincushion outside the door. If you walk past a house and see a white pincushion edged with lace and looking very dainty, you may understand that the number of inhabitants has been increased by one, and that one a girl.

When the happy couple are blessed with a boy, the color of the pincushion is red.

In Japan the people do something similar, yet more extensive. Outside the houses of a town you will see one or more paper fishes dangling and blowing in the wind. On making inquiry you are informed that the paper fishes represent the boys of the household. Every new boy means another fish. These imitations of the koi are decorated with colored silk and are thought a great deal of.

The fish which the Japanese call koi is noted for its courage and tenacity, and is therefore regarded as a fitting representation of the coming man.

A Purse For the Bride.

Some brides may be inclined to regret that the old marriage custom of the dowry has fallen into disuse. It was the custom of the bridegroom to fill a purse with a goodly sum of money and present it to the bride on the wedding day as the price of the purchase of her person. It sounds like slavery, like the buying of goods and chattels, yet the bride had a nice little sum of money for her own use.

Some of the oldest inhabitants of Cumberland may remember a similar custom in that county. The bridegroom provided himself with a number of gold and silver pieces, and at the words "with all my worldly goods I thee endow" he handed the clergyman his fee and poured the other coins into a handkerchief held out for that purpose by the bride.

In other places, again, the bride had the right to ask her husband for a gift of money or property on the day after the wedding, and he was bound in honor to grant the request.—London Answers.

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THE HEART OF HUNGARY.

Fest, Which is Joined by a Hyphen and Five Bridges to Buda.

Situated on a river which bears more tongues than any other on its long journey to the sea, feeling the influence of the orient as well as the accident, expressive of the progress of a race whose heart is young, is Pest, one of the newest of cities, joined by a hyphen and five bridges to Buda, one of the oldest of capitals. Here there need be no

to preserve the sentiment that would preserve an ancient building and the enterprise that would put something more serviceable in its place. In much the same way that one may have portraits of his ancestors hung on the walls of a steam heated house, without interfering with the utilities, so the Magyar from a comfortable chair in his cafe, while he listens to stock exchange quotations or the opera over the telephone, may look across the Danube at the monuments of the Hungarian past. On our part we should have a parallel if Washington were the commercial metropolis as well as the capital and we moved the heights of Arlington farther down the Potomac and crowned them with Liberty hall, Castle William and Old South church.

In other European cities where an old municipal site adjoins a modern, though hills are leveled and mounds filled, the cramping effect of narrow alleyways and crooked streets still remains. The heights of the Buda side found a natural stronghold in the middle ages. There the first Hungarian king was crowned; there the Turkish janizaries were encamped for the hundred years that the walls of Vienna were an unyielding bulwark against the tide of Moslem invasion; there in later times the patriots inspired by Kossuth made a gallant stand. The successors of the old warriors and their people had only to cross the stream to find a plain which was equally suitable for a twentieth century city, where in peace they have won successes that they failed to win in war.—Frederick Palmer in Scribner's.

When he doesn't have to twist his arms to book his bodice up the back. When he can wear his best hat in the rain without getting the curl out of the feathers.

When he gives his hair a neat little slick with a comb and presto! his coiffure is complete.

When the children cry and he can whistle a tune, get his hat, bang the door and go out.

When he stows things away in his multitudinous pockets and saunters on with unnumbered hands.

When he trips up the street on a rainy day with his trousers jauntily turned up and no skirts to kick.

When he swings easily on and off a moving car without danger of tangling his heels in his petticoats.

When the dinner is spoiled and he chats unconcernedly and all the guests pity him because he is married to an incompetent, fussy, discomposed woman.—Chicago Journal.

WHEN MAN IS ENVIED.

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Beauty's Varieties.

The French say there are several "ages" as well as kinds of beauty—the beauty of mere youthfulness, which they call la beauté du diable; also a beauty of "ingliness," of "old age" and of "thinness," called la beauté du singe. Frederika Bremer, the Swedish novelist, had the beauty of "plainness." She was so very plain of face that her expression of trustfulness, as though appealing to you to find some other qualities in her than mere "looks," shone out with a perfect radiance that ennobled her face and drew friends to her, because she had no other beauty. But Miss Bremer took pleasure in her well kept hands, of which she used to say, "Even hands have their moments of charm."

Wild Animals and the Human Voice.

Gordon Cumming was perhaps the first to discover the effect of the human voice upon wild animals. On one occasion he had a lioness in full retreat before him. He called loudly to her, whereupon she snarled like a huge dog and permitted him to approach. In a similar venture he checked the charge of a lioness by yelling at her and continued to do so, while she remained perplexedly sniffing the ground and allowed him to escape.

Time to Get Aboard.

"Porter, is my ticket good on this train?"

"Yes, sah. Step right in, sah."

"This is a fast train, ain't it?"

"It's de fast mail, sah."

"How fast does it run?"

"Sometimes a mile a minute, sah."

"Whew! Does it ever leave the tracks?"

"No, sah, but it sometimes leaves de passengers. Better git aboard, sah."—Kansas City Journal.

Squaring Himself.

Stage Carpenter (who has been sent on in an emergency to say a line)—Me lord, the police 'ave discovered your whereabouts and even now approach.

The Bold, Bad Baron—"Tis false—false!"

The Stage Carpenter—All right. Then you go and arak the blooming stage manager. He told me.—London Telegraph.

After the Wedding.

He—It certainly was a pretty wedding, and everything was so nicely arranged.

She—That's just what I think. And the music was especially appropriate.

He—I don't remember. What did they play?

She—"The Last Hope."—Lippincott's Magazine.

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NOTE—This lot comprises Children's Socks, half hose, three-quarter and full lengths, in white, black and a few colors, some in lace and plain effects, also silk clocking.

GROUP NO. 4, values up to 69c, for, a pair 29c

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Clothes Wringer—Continental, 3128, for stationary wash tub, regular 5.25, special 2.49.	Chopping Trays—Hardwood, first quality. Size No. 1, 2, 3, 4. Regular 29c 39c 49c 69c Special 25c 35c 45c 65c
Commodore—Imitation black walnut or antique, regular 2.98, special 2.49.	White Porcelain Salt Boxes—Regular 25c, special 21c.
Blacking Cabinets—Imitation black walnut, regular 98c, special 85c.	Knife Scouring Boards—White wood, two styled. Regular 29c 35c Special 25c 31c
Hanging Meat Scales—Ash, varnished finish, single door, regular 2.8, special 2.29, double door, regular 3.60, special 2.89.	Knife Boxes—Hardwood varnished. Regular 10c, special 7c.
Clothes Horses—White wood, square bar. Regular 59c 98c 1.25 1.49 Special 49c 79c 98c 1.19	Rush Shopping Bags—Regular 10c, special 7c.
Settee Tables—White pine, with 1½ inch thick legs, having an apartment for iron, blankets, etc., tops with rounded edges. Sizes 3 3½ 4 4½ 5 6 ft. Regular 4.29 4.0 4.80 5.40 5.98 7.13 Special 3.45 3.60 3.85 4.25 4.79 6.75	Star Captain Stretcher—7 ft. by 14 ft. Regular 1.19, special 1.05.
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